

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 13719 01 OF 02 270930Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----005491 270931Z /11
O 261348Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9613
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 13719

EXDIS (DISCTIBUTE AS NODIS)

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y TEXT PARA 6 LINES 5 AND 6 TRANSPOSED

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV PBOR IS US EG
SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS: WEIZMAN/GAMASY MEETING?

REF: TEL AVIV 6545

1. SUMMARY: EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES BETWEEN GAMASY AND WEIZMAN OVER PAST FEW DAYS LEAVES BALL IN WEIZMAN'S COURT TO DECIDE WHETHER TO ASSERT THAT "DEFINITE AND SPECIFIC NEW ELEMENTS TO BRING ABOUT A BREAKTHROUGH" WARRANT A GAMASY/WEIZMAN MEETING. IF SO, EGYPTIANS WANT SUCH MEETING IN THIRD COUNTRY AND "IN THE OPEN." GAMASY MESSAGE ENDS BY EXPRESSING HOPE THAT "THE COMING FEW WEEKS WILL WITNESS EMERGENCE OF A GENUINE MOVE TOWARD PEACE." END SUMMARY.
2. MFA UNDER SECRETARY OSAMA EL-BAZ, WHO AS DEPT AWARE HAS ROLE IN BOTH PRESIDENCY AND MFA, ASKED ME TO CALL ON HIM URGENTLY ON MAY 26, SAYING HE HAD TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO REACH ME EVENING MAY 25. EL-BAZ SAID SADAT WANTED TO INFORM PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE OF AN EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES BETWEEN GENERAL GAMASY AND WEIZMAN OVER LAST
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FEW DAYS, JUST TO KEEP US FULLY BRIEFED ON WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE.

3. A FEW DAYS AGO GAMASY SENT A MESSGE TO WEIZMAN THROUGH CHANNEL ESTABLISHED BY ISRAELI MILITARY DELEGATION AT GIANACLIS ASKING WHAT WEIZMAN WANTED DONE ABOUT THESE MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO HAD BEEN LEFT HERE AND WHO FOR THE

TIME BEING HAD NO APPARENT PURPOSE. ON MAY 25 GAMASY RECEIVED A REPLY FROM WEIZMAN PROPOSING THAT WEIZMAN COME TO EGYPT WITH BARAK TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER AS WELL AS "SOME OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO PEACE PROCESS". EL-BAZ COMMENTED THAT ISRAELIS WERE VERY FAST TO SEIZE ANY OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO RECOMMENCE THE GAMASY/WEIZMAN DIALOGUE. HE THEN READ ME EXCERPTS OF GAMASY REPLY, SENT AFTERNOON MAY 25, WHICH IN EFFECT SAYS THERE SEEMS NO POINT TO FURTHER MEETINGS UNLESS THERE ARE SOME NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON ISRAELI SIDE THAT WOULD GIVE HOPE FOR PROGRESS IN THOSE TALKS. IF THERE WERE SUCH POSSIBILITY FOR "BREAKTHROUGH", THEN MEETING COULD BE HELD BUT IT SHOULD BE IN A THIRD COUNTRY AND SHOULD BE COMPLETELY OPEN AND NOT SECRET. DOCUMENT FROM WHICH EL-BAZ READ APPEARED TO BE IN ENGLISH BUT HE DID NOT, SO FAR AS I COULD TELL, READ ENTIRE MESSAGE, AND AT POINTS HE APPEARED TO PARAPHRASE, SO WHAT FOLLOWS IS NOT EXACT RENDITION OF TEXT WEIZMAN RECEIVED.

4. BEGIN GAMASY RESPONSE: FIRST, OUR CONSENT TO KEEP THESE PERSONNEL IN EGYPT DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE NO FUNCTION FOR THE TIME BEING HAS BEEN A GESTURE OF GOOD WILL. SECOND, WITH REGARD TO THE PROPOSED MEETING WE WANT TO CLARIFY THIS POINT WITH THE ISRAELIS SO THEY WILL BE AWARE OF THE WAY WE LOOK AT IT. THE MERE HOLDING OF ANY MEETING WILL NOT SERVE ANY USEFUL PURPOSE IN THE SECRET

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ABSENCE OF SOME CONCRETE AND SPECIFIC PROGRESS. IN OTHER WORDS THE ISRAELIS MUST HAVE SOME NEW IDEAS OR CERTAIN NEW CONCEPTIONS THAT ARE INDICATIVE OF A NEW ATTITUDE. TO ELABORATE THIS POINT, HOLDING ANY MEETING COULD BACKFIRE UNLESS THERE IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING SOME PROGRESS THROUGH DISCUSSIONS IN THESE MEETINGS, BECAUSE HOPES COULD GO HIGH AND PEOPLE WOULD THEN BE FRUSTRATED AND FEEL LET DOWN. THIS IS EVEN MORE THE CASE IN VIEW OF THE NEGATIVE AND OBSTRUCTIVE STATEMENTS MADE BY THE ISRAELI SIDE IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS. IN LIGHT OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS GENERAL GAMASY WOULD BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH WEIZMAN IN CASE HE HAS SOME DEFINITE AND SPECIFIC NEW ELEMENTS THAT ARE LIKELY TO BRING ABOUT A BREAKTHROUGH. IF SUCH IS THE CASE WE THINK THE MEETING SHOULD BE HELD IN A THIRD COUNTRY AND IN THE OPEN AND NOT SECRET. AGAIN WE EMPHASIZE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR INFLUENCING OUR DECISION IS THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC MOVEMENT IN THE ISRAELI POSITION, BECAUSE WE FEEL THAT WE HAVE GONE BEYOND THE EXPLORATORY STAGE. WE ALSO EXPRESS OUR HOPE THAT THE COMING FEW WEEKS WILL WITNESS THE EMERGENCE OF A GENUINE MOVE TOWARD PEACE. END GAMASY RESPONSE.

5. EL-BAZ REPEATED THAT ABOVE INFORMATION WAS TO KEEP
PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE INFORMED AND NO
ACTION WAS REQUIRED ON OUR PART.

6. COMMENT: ABOVE EXCHANGES EVIDENTLY RESULTED FROM
GAMASY INITIATIVE TO QUERY WEIZMAN ABOUT THE ISRAELI
MILITARY DELEGATION HERE. WEIZMAN SEIZED THIS OPPORTUNITY
TO SUGGEST A NEW MEETING, WHICH WAS TO BE EXPECTED IN
LIGHT OF REFTEL. EGYPTIANS THEN RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY
TO TRY TO SHIFT THE BURDEN TO THE ISRAELI SIDE TO INDICATE
THAT THERE ARE "DEFINITE AND SPECIFIC NEW ELEMENTS THAT

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EXDIS (DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS)

ARE LIKELY TO BRING ABOUT A BREAKTHROUGH". IF A MEETING
IS TO BE HELD, SUCH MEETING WOULD BE IN A THIRD COUNTRY
AND PUBLICLY KNOWN. WHY GAMASY GAVE WEIZMAN THE OPENING
TO SUGGEST A NEW MEETING IS NOT CLEAR NOR IS THERE ANY
INDICATION THAT WEIZMAN RESPONDED WITH HIS SUGGESTION
ON ANYONE'S AUTHORITY BUT HIS OWN. WE CAN BE SURE THAT
SADAT PERSONALLY APPROVED GAMASY'S VERY QUICK REPLY,
WHICH IN TURN SEEMS TO CALL FOR SOME KIND OF ANSWER FROM
WEIZMAN. MATTHEWS

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